



## YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### Policy and Procedure #366.0 Supervised Alternative Learning

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#### Executive Summary

The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) is committed to supporting students whose secondary school graduation and/or well-being is at risk by providing students with the opportunity to explore programming options and resources outside of a traditional school setting.

#### Who has responsibilities?

- Board of Trustees
- Director of Education
- Superintendents of Education
- Principals
- Staff members
- Students
- Parents/Guardians
- Students
- Community representatives

#### How is this policy and/or procedure related to Board priorities?

The Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) policy and procedure is related to the Board's [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#), specifically, Fostering Well-being and Mental Health, Championing Equity and Inclusivity and Building Collaborative Relationships. SAL is committed to ensuring practices value and promote student mental and physical well-being; providing access to differentiated and relevant learning opportunities, resources and programs that reflect our students and communities and engaging all students as active partners in their learning.

#### Legislative Context

##### [Education Act](#)

##### Department

Student Services  
Curriculum and Instructional Services – Student Success



# Board Policy #366.0 Supervised Alternative Learning

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## **Policy Statement**

The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) is committed to supporting students whose secondary school graduation and/or well-being is at risk by providing students with the opportunity to explore programming options and resources outside of a traditional school setting.

The Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) program excuses students from regular attendance at school while encouraging them to explore alternative learning experiences such as:

- flexible credit attainment and/or part-time schooling;
- employment and/or volunteer activities;
- job or life skills training;
- counselling; and/or
- other activities that will assist the student in meeting their academic, well-being and life goals.

## **Responsibilities**

*The Board of Trustees is responsible for:*

- ensuring the attendance of at least one trustee at all Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) Appeal Committee meetings and SAL Review Committee meetings;
- ensuring Board-appointed trustee is familiar with committee roles and responsibilities;
- reviewing the Supervised Alternative Learning policy in accordance with the priorities in the Multi-Year Plan and the approved policy review cycle; and
- understanding and communicating with members of the community about the Supervised Alternative Learning policy, as required.

*The Director of Education is responsible for:*

- implementing and operationalizing the Supervised Alternative Learning policy.

## **Definitions**

*Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)*

This program is for students who are struggling to attend school consistently or engage with the regular day school program. SAL provides alternatives for the acquisition of secondary school credits outside of the regular day-school program and/or emphasizes goals related to student well-being.

*Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP)*

An individualized plan that is formulated for each student once a Student Success Team meeting has determined that SAL is in the best interests of the student and includes the following information:

- the student's own educational, well-being and other life goals;
- a description of the activities in which the student will participate under the plan;
- the name of the student's primary contact person;

- the ways in which the student's primary contact person will monitor the student's progress;
- the ways in which the student will be helped with their transition from supervised alternative learning after the plan expires or is terminated; and
- the expiry date of the plan.

#### *Supervised Alternative Learning Appeal Committee*

Supports situations through problem solving/resources/supports where there is no agreement about the SAL application and SALP. The SAL appeal must occur within **20** days of parent(s)/guardian(s)/students request. This committee meets to reconsider its decision regarding the SAL application and SALP. The committee will include at least one trustee, area superintendent, Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services, Student Success Lead as well as the presenting principal, school social worker and primary contact person.

#### *Supervised Alternative Learning Review Committee*

This committee is offered to the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), involved community partner and the home school to offer problem solving/resources/support in instances where the student is struggling to participate or complete elements of the SALP. The committee will be convened by the area superintendent of education when requests are received from school principals. The committee includes at least one trustee, and area superintendent as well as the presenting principal, school social worker and primary contact person/SAL teacher.

#### **History**

Approved: April 2013

Working Document: October 3, 2011, July 2018

Revised: November 2019



# Board Procedure #366.0 Supervised Alternative Learning

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This procedure outlines the steps to be taken when a student is being referred to the Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) program.

## Responsibilities

*The Director of Education shall:*

- allocate staff and resources to support the Supervised Alternative Learning procedure.

*The Superintendents of Education shall:*

- offer support and advice to administrators on Supervised Alternative Learning;
- approve the SAL application and its renewal, if applicable;
- approve any significant changes to a student's Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP);
- liaise with school staff, monitoring SAL recommendations and placements and attending meetings, as appropriate;
- upon written notification from the parent(s)/guardian, ensure the SAL Appeal Committee meets to reconsider its decision;
- attend SAL Review Committee meetings and SAL Appeal Committee meetings;
- receive Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) applications and Supervised Alternative Learning Plans (SALPs) from their specific schools for review and possible approval;
- when approving SAL applications, ensure the SALP is complete and appropriate to the student's needs;
- send approved SAL applications and SALPs to the home school and the Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services for central storage;
- refer situations where there is no agreement about the SAL application and SALP to the SAL Appeal Committee, by contacting the Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services and Student Success Lead;
- ensure SAL Appeals Committee meeting occurs **within 20 days of parent(s)/guardian(s)/students request to reconsider the Committee's decision**; and
- attend SAL Review and SAL Appeal Committee meetings for schools.

*The Senior Staff Members with Oversight of Student Services and Curriculum and Instructional Services shall:*

- provide an annual report to trustees about Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) programs.

*The Supervised Alternative Learning Review Committee shall:*

- receive training on their roles and responsibilities;
- establish and publish regular SAL meeting dates;
- invite attendees to the scheduled committee meeting;
- ensure that all parties are notified (under the signature of the board supervisory officer on the committee) of the decision of the committee; and
- Ensure the Memorandum of Understanding, outlining the goals for the student and actions as discussed in the meeting is completed.

*The Supervised Alternative Learning Appeal Committee shall:*

- receive training on their roles and responsibilities,
- meet within twenty school days of receiving the request for reconsideration;
- review the request to reconsider the SAL decision or the SALP;
- approve or reject SAL for the student;
- approve or modify the SALP, where appropriate; and
- notify the parent or student and the principal regarding the committee's decision within five days of the reconsideration meeting.

*Principals shall:*

- engage in consultations with the school social worker and SAL teacher regarding student attendance, well-being and prospective SAL candidates;
- ensure that a Student Success Team meeting takes place to plan for each student who might be a candidate for Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL);
- ensure SAL is in the best interests of the student;
- ensure that all paperwork is completed and shared with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student;
- approve any minor changes to a student's SALP;
- ensure that the student has appropriate support to meet their goals;
- identify students with a SALP who need additional support to the SAL Review Committee; and
- attend the SAL Review Committee and SAL Appeal Committee meetings.
- ensure the school social worker, and regional SAL teacher have been contacted for a consultation when considering a student's candidacy for SAL;
- ensure that all students who are potential candidates for Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) are presented at a Student Success Team meeting to:
  - discuss the strategies that have been attempted to re-engage the student, both within and outside of the classroom, discuss any additional strategies that might be implemented,
  - explore resources which may benefit the student's well-being and could be supported within the SALP,
  - make a decision as to whether SAL is in the best interests of the student, and
  - create a Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP);
- ensure parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are made aware of:
  - the rationale for the recommendation to SAL,
  - the content of the SALP,
  - their right to have input into the plan,
  - notification of the date, time and location for the SAL meeting,
- ensure the school social worker, who is either involved with the student or who has consent to attend the meeting, is invited to discuss the application for SAL and is invited to attend the SAL meeting;
- ensure that the regional SAL teacher/primary contact is involved in the application process and the development of the SALP;
- ensure that the SAL application and SALP are submitted to the superintendent of education for review and possible approval;
- ensure that a SAL meeting takes place at the school **within 20 school days** of the application and SALP being completed;
- ensure that all necessary school staff attend the SAL meeting;
- chair the SAL meeting;
- encourage the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student to attend a SAL meeting at the school;
- ensure that the decision of the Student Success Committee to proceed to SAL and the SALP is provided in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student **within 5 days**;
- ensure that the school social worker is consulted if referrals for mental health or well-being are being sought by the student as part of the SALP;
- ensure that the appropriate SAL holding code is entered into the student's timetable;

- complete a Request for SAL Renewal form and revised SALP if all parties are in agreement that a second year of SAL is required;
- ensure that the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student is aware of their right to appeal to the SAL Committee decision **within 10 days** if they are not in agreement;
- review the SALP with the Student Success Team at least fifteen school days before the plan expires;
- ensure the Student Success Team creates a Transition Plan if the SALP is terminated or not reviewed;
- recommend that the Student Success Team renew the SALP for a maximum of one year without requiring the student to appear at SAL Review Committee meeting with the Student Success Team;
- ensure the SAL Appeals Committee convenes to consider the renewal of the SALP if the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not in agreement with the SALP;
- ensure data is maintained regarding all students in SAL programs as per Ministry requirements;
- ensure that students, who are between 14 and 17 years of age, are not participating in SAL, and who have 15 consecutive days of unauthorized absences, in any class, are;
  - referred to the school social worker as per SAL legislation,
  - maintained on the attendance register for a total of **60 days** under the direction of the school social worker using the appropriate holding code,
  - removed from the attendance register after 60 days if not re-engaged in school, and
  - recorded on an early school leaver list of students who will receive follow up by the re-engagement team,
- identify, as needed, students with a SALP who need additional support to the SAL Review Committee;
- contact the school social worker prior to the student being demitted from the register, in the event a student is not able to be engaged in SAL; and
- ensure that demitted students are contacted at the beginning of each semester to offer educational options.

*The Student Success Team shall:*

- establish meetings that bring together key school and Board staff to review the progress of students at risk of not graduating;
- convene as a committee to review the application for SAL and develop a SAL Plan as needed;
- make recommendations to the Superintendent to approve or reject the SAL Application;
- suggest types or means of contact for monitoring and the preferred schedule for monitoring according to student needs;
- review the SALP at least fifteen school days before the plan expires;
- make recommendations to renew the SALP if the student is not ready to transition into regular programming;
- develop a transition plan if the student is ready to transition to regular programming; and
- implement appropriate instruction, resources, programming and opportunities that address the student's strengths, needs and interests and promote academic achievement and/or well-being.

*School Social Workers shall:*

- refer secondary students who may be struggling with school attendance, engagement, and social/emotional concerns for consideration for SAL;
- attend Student Success Team meetings, with appropriate consent, if involved with the student;
- support the school to discuss the application for Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and students and obtain their input into the SALP;
- attend the SAL Review and SAL Appeal Committee meetings, where necessary;
- provide referrals for mental health and well-being when students are seeking referral information as part of a SALP;
- accept and monitor social work and attendance referrals for students, who are between 14 and 17 years of age, who are not attending SAL, and who have 15 consecutive days of absence as outlined in Procedure #312.0, [Social Work and Attendance Services](#);

- connect with students regarding absences and attempt to re-engage them in school as per SAL legislation,
- provide the school with a prolonged absence report that indicates the date of contact with the student and allows for the use of the appropriate attendance code to allow for the student to remain on the rolls, as per the Register of Daily Attendance,
- communicate with the school regarding the progress of re-engaging students aged 14 to 17 years, and
- advise the school at the completion of 60 days of absence to remove the student from the attendance register.

*The Student Success Teachers shall:*

- attend Student Success Team meetings;
- assist with the development of the SALP; and
- attend the SAL Appeal Committee, where necessary.

*The Supervised Alternative Learning Teachers/Primary Contact Person shall:*

- provide programming that allows students to complete credits, engage in employment, volunteer work, skill development, pathway exploration or participate in social and/or emotional programming/support;
- provide monitoring support for students on SALP on, at minimum, every two weeks;
- where the student is based in a community setting (e.g. employment or volunteer), the SAL teacher/primary contact person will ensure that the opportunity meets safety requirements consistent with Ministry's Cooperative Education policies;
- Where successful two way contact has taken place, the SAL teacher/Primary Contact Person will ensure that a "c" code entry is made by the attendance secretary into the Student Information System (SIS); and
- suggest and seek approval for any changes to the student's SALP that will support student engagement.
- provide regular updates on the student's progress to the Student Success Team and Principal;
- coordinate the renewal for SAL request; and
- provide a report that will inform the Transition Plan.

*The Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services shall:*

- receive and maintain all records of approved Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) applications and Supervised Alternative Learning Plans (SALPs) in accordance with relevant privacy legislation;
- as requested by the superintendent of education, arrange and facilitate with the Student Success Lead, SAL Appeal Committee meetings with the parent(s)/guardian(s), student, superintendent of education, local trustee (or alternate), and appropriate school staff; in attendance; and
- oversee the maintenance of SAL data.

*The Student Success Lead shall:*

- as requested by the superintendent of education, arrange and facilitate with the Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services, SAL Appeal Committee meetings with the parent(s)/guardian(s), student, superintendent of education, local trustee (or alternate), and appropriate school staff; in attendance;
- gather information related to student SAL participation and programming from school principals; and
- report SAL data to the Ministry as required.

*Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall:*

- initiate a Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) application or provide input into the principal's application;
- consider signing a consent to release confidential information to the school, if necessary;
- work with the Student Success Team and other school staff to develop the SALP;
- attend a SAL meeting to finalize the proposed SAL and/or SALP;
- request an appeal **within 10 days** of receiving the decision regarding SAL application and SALP and attend a SAL Appeal Committee meeting if they are not in agreement with the decision;
- request and attend a SAL Review Committee meeting in the event the student is not participating in the SAL program;
- participate in the renewal for SAL request, as required;
- participate in the review of the SALP, as required; and
- participate in the development of the Transition Plan.

*Students shall:*

- consider signing a consent to release confidential information to the school, if necessary;
- work with the Student Success Team and other school staff to develop the SALP;
- attend a Supervised Alternative Learning meeting to finalize the proposed SAL and/or SALP;
- request and attend a SAL Appeal Committee meeting where there is no agreement about the SAL application and SALP;
- request and attend a SAL Review Committee meeting in the event they are not participating in the SAL program.
- participate in the review of the SALP, as required;
- participate in the renewal for SAL request, as required; and
- participate in the development of Transition Plan.

*Students, withdrawn from parental control, shall:*

- initiate a SAL application or provide input into the principal's application;
- consider signing a consent to release confidential information to the school, if necessary;
- work with the Student Success Team and other staff to develop the SALP;
- attend a SAL meeting to finalize the proposed SAL and/or SALP;
- request and attend a SAL Appeal Committee meeting if not satisfied with the proposed SAL and/or SALP;
- request and attend a SAL Review Committee meeting in the event they are not participating in the SAL program;
- participate in the review of the SALP, as required;
- participate in the Renewal for SAL request, as required; and
- participate in the development of Transition Plan.

## **Definitions**

### *Student Success Team*

Includes the school principal, student success teacher, guidance head, special education head, ESL head, Child and Youth Worker, Literacy teacher, and Personalized Alternative Education Community-based Education head.



### *Student Success Team Meeting*

Using a case management approach, Student Success Team meetings bring together key school and Board staff to review the progress of students at risk of not graduating and put in place appropriate instruction, resources, programming and opportunities that address the student's strengths, needs and interests and promote academic achievement and/or well-being.

### **History**

Replaced Procedure #NP366.0, Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils

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